


A Critical Review of Education Policy Provisions in Nepal Focusing on Basic Education

¹Bisna Acharya, PhD, ²Surya Sigdel

¹Faculty Member of Education, Tribhuvan University, Mahendra Ratna Campus, Kathmandu, Nepal.
[(Email: acharyabisna@gmail.com), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8457-1043>]

² Assistant Professor of Education, Tribhuvan University, Mahendra Ratna Campus, Kathmandu, Nepal. [(Email: suryasigdel41@gmail.com), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-1807-2191>]

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Abstract

This study aims to conducting a comprehensive review of education policy provisions that pertain to elementary school education. An analytical research design has been employed to thoroughly examine policies from a critical standpoint. An extensive analysis was carried out to investigate the provisions of education policy, encompassing various policies such as those outlined in the constitution, education policies, education acts, and laws. Education was provided at no cost, with students receiving complimentary textbooks, scholarships, and tuition waivers. These benefits were available to students for the duration of their entire educational journey, without any fees. The findings indicated that the education policies of offering complimentary and compulsory education in elementary and primary school were positively received. This study offers valuable insights for creating precise guidelines to efficiently implement policies. One strategy is to incorporate an educational plan that encompasses the entire policy implementation process. In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate the importance of implementing future policies that support the development of hostels, educational programs, and personalized care approaches for children who are facing academic difficulties.

Keywords: School education, Policy provisions, Basic education, Analysis, Nepalese perspective

Introduction

Elementary education is the cornerstone of learning and educational careers for students in Nepal. Primary education is the child's first official, structured learning experience. This level offers the resources needed to acquire the fundamental knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and routines for teaching a citizen. Basic education can help young people develop a common understanding which is crucial in the fight against illiteracy. Children's intellectual, moral, emotional, and physical development happens quickly at the elementary school level.

According to the Ministry of Education in 1956, basic education is essential to a nation's social, political, religious, economic, and cultural growth. The Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC, 1956) was established as the first of a succession of commissioners tasked with

expanding school education. Along with infrastructure development and teacher supply, the NNEPC has encouraged the Nepali government to provide universal, free, and obligatory primary education ([Ministry of Education, 1956](#)).

Nepal's education system is rapidly growing. Primary education, the cornerstone of learning, is the path to eliminating illiteracy from the country. Children's mental, moral, emotional, and cultural development begin at this level of schooling. Children can comprehend the country's socioeconomic progress in primary school. Basic education in Nepal was a five-year course ([National Education Commission, 1992](#)). However, basic education lasts eight years at the moment.

The school education sector in Nepal comprises preprimary level (ECD/ Kindergarten/ Montessori), basic level (Grade 1-8), and secondary level (Grade 9-12). The government of Nepal developed and implemented the School Sector Development Program (SSDP) from July 2016 to July 2023 to continue its effort to ensure equitable access to quality education for all. The students need access to high-quality basic education to gain necessary learning skills and prepare them for secondary education. The program also includes encouraging social peace, providing young people with an early introduction to the country's economy, and promoting life skills and value-based education ([Ministry of Education, 2016](#)).

As a result, education policy is a set of directives and a plan of action created by governments and other organizations to encourage and impact transparent and consistent decision-making. To solve societal issues, the government has developed public policies. These policies reflect a country's development objectives and are influenced by local, national, and worldwide culture, philosophy, and economics. The organization of policies, strategies, and programs is consistently hierarchical and aligned with development goals. As a result, the policy sequence has prioritized particular concerns and long-term objectives. Policies serve both preventive and remedial objectives.

Academic policies are defined as the strategic relationship between a country's educational goal and the daily operations of its educational system. Owing to comprehensive training initiatives, staff, and decision-makers can understand their responsibilities within set parameters. Because of education initiatives, management may oversee operations without constantly intervening ([Viennet & Pont, 2017](#)).

Nepal's educational system is still developing, with many policies and initiatives being developed. Classroom teaching is the foundation of the pedagogical movement to empower citizens' consciousness. Basic and primary education are the most important stages of education in schools, and to guarantee high-quality instruction, adequate educational policies and efficient execution are needed. Evaluation of education policies and rules is necessary to determine their efficacy. Research studies must be conducted continuously to analyze the provisions of education policies and provide feedback for the betterment. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to examine Nepal's basic and primary education policy provisions.

Review of Literature

Regarding the review of related studies, policies, and practices related to education have been examined in the study. The procedures and components of education policy practices are the main topics of the literature review. The current education policy, educational rules and regulations, and

other relevant documents have been examined to find the strategies for protecting people's and their families' rights to an education. Under the first plan, a greater focus was on education during the planning stages, and the nation created 2,000 elementary schools.

The national primary enrollment rate in Ranas during the period of the Rana dictatorship was just 0.9% of that of the 6- to 10-year-old age group, while the country's overall literacy rate was barely 2%. In Nepal, education was recognized as a social change agent for the Ranas and their enemies (Sharma, 1990). Numerous obstacles stood in the way of education's growth and improvement. There were not enough schools, no universities to train teachers, and not enough qualified teachers.

According to the National Education Commission Planning Report, the main goal of education was to meet national, universal, and individual requirements, and serve the general public interest. Primary education plans were already in place, 400 new teachers were trained annually, and these teachers were constantly starting new schools (National Planning Commission, 1956).

Rather than building new educational facilities, the emphasis was on improving the existing ones. There was a rise in primary enrollment from 1.99 million to 3.46 million pupils. The proportion of school-age children who completed elementary education rose from 15.3% to 27% (National Planning Commission, 1962), by 1880, the planners aimed to achieve UNESCO standards for free and mandatory basic education. Additionally, the government started promoting primary school funding, which progressively decreased the degree of local school self-sufficiency. Further, over half of elementary school children drop out of the first grade due to the high expense and few rewards (National Planning Commission, 1965).

The quality of instruction has declined due to various problems with primary education, including a high dropout rate, a shortage of teachers in schools, and inadequate local resource mobilization. It was evident that insufficient financial support was poor for other educational inputs because wages made up more than 80% of income (National Planning Commission, 1970). Several measures were implemented to boost female enrollment in primary schools. Some of them were recruitment of more qualified female teachers, opening more schools, and winning the cooperation of other class groups and local authorities (National Planning Commission, 1975) were some of them.

The provision emphasizes character development in lower secondary education to promote secondary school enrollment. The sixed plan (1980-1985) set the policy's goal to raise educational standards while streamlining the educational facilities that are already in place. The objective of the plan was to provide access to lower secondary education for 40% of students in the student body between the ages of 11 and 12, and elementary education for 75% of children between the ages of 6 and 10 (National Planning Commission, 1980).

Before the seventh plan, there were no formal regulations for elementary education, either free or required. A low percentage of females enrolled in basic schools became an issue when the seventh plan contained a clause permitting towns to start enforcing attendance at school and listed elementary education as one of the necessities of the people (National Planning Commission, 1985). Although it was suggested that local governments be given the authority to implement elementary education as a pilot program, they decided to do so. It also created literacy programs for women who were not allowed to attend formal education and one female teacher for every primary school (National Planning Commission, 1992).

The expansion policy was put into practice by the strategy, which made primary education required based on field experience. Many initiatives are listed in the plan document, such as the progressive adoption of the Continuous Assessment System, the experimental liberal promotion policy up to class three, the first attempt to provide primary education in the native language, and the simple and efficient distribution of textbooks ([National Planning Commission, 1997](#)).

Building an institutional, administrative, and physical infrastructural foundation to facilitate this was one of the strategies' objectives ([National Planning Commission, 2002](#)). The goal was to progressively make primary education necessary, universal, and free. To mandate basic education, a central-to-local network needs to be established. To increase attendance and decrease dropout rates, the impoverished neighborhood will get meals, scholarships, and edible oil through the network ([National Planning Commission, 2007](#)).

By implementing an efficient work plan for basic education and developing a clear action plan to address any unresolved issues with teacher management and educational administration, the plan prioritized providing high-quality instruction while maintaining free and mandatory basic education (grades 1–8). It was projected ([National Planning Commission, 2010](#)) that 90% of students would have enrolled at the basic level (1–8). The educational plan's objectives were to raise the bar for instruction across the board and provide a free, integrated secondary school system. It was projected that 64% of first-graders with knowledge of early childhood development would be enrolled when the plan was finished.

The management of basic education, which was required and free, was the main emphasis of the strategy. According to the plan, net enrollment at the basic level (Grades 1–8) would reach 94% ([National Planning Commission, 2016](#)). The objective of the 15th Plan (2019) is to develop human resources via superior education that are innovative, competitive, talented, and creative. The strategy aims to provide early childhood education, free secondary school admission, high-quality, technologically-friendly education, and mandatory, free basic education for all students. To address the needs of students from disadvantaged, minority, and vulnerable populations all of whom would get free, required education the plan asks for open and alternative education ([National Planning Commission, 2019](#)).

To preserve total darkness untainted by contemporary society, Nepal has taken an isolationist stand. Primary education is the fundamental building block of learning, according to a 1956 NPE study report. Eliminating illiteracy on a national scale may be accomplished through primary education. Children in primary school, ages 6 to 11, get supervision, guidance, and direction. Among other things, the commission has suggested that primary schools be strictly non-segregated and coeducational, with an equal number of boys and girls ([NNEPC, 1956](#)). According to the National Education System 1971 of the Ministry of Education (1971), reading, writing, math, and a basic understanding of Nepal was taught to both boys and girls in elementary school ([Ministry of Education, 1971](#)).

According to the Education Act (2018), a kid must regularly attend class and complete the foundational levels of study once they reach the age that the Nepali government designates and accepted by a school or other alternative educational institution. The Act placed a strong emphasis on the right to education by guaranteeing that everyone has the same access to high-quality education and that no one would face discrimination in their pursuit of an education ([Nepal Law Commission, 2018](#)).

According to [MOEST \(2019b\)](#), the legislation requires the government to offer free basic education to kids up to the eighth grade and free secondary education to students in grades 9 through 12. The need for mandatory primary education programs for all children was acknowledged ([URSAP, 1998](#)). According to the research, the initiative should be implemented gradually, starting in areas with high levels of infrastructure development and universal primary school enrollment.

Free services for entrance, textbooks, tuition, and examinations are among the prerequisites for offering free basic education. Laws would also encourage the community to keep mobilizing the additional funds required for quality enhancement ([Ministry of Education, 2009](#)). According to the 2015 Nepalese Constitution, everyone has the right to free, mandatory basic education up to the secondary level as well as access to it. According to [GON \(1992\)](#), every individual has the right to free education up to the secondary level and free, required basic education. Primary schools form children's clubs, and to enhance learning outcomes and lower attrition throughout the transition from sixth to eighth grade, kids must have access to peer support networks ([Ministry of Education, 2016](#)).

Nepal took the following critical actions: free primary education, free textbook distribution, scholarship programs, one female teacher requirement, continuous evaluation system, gender inequality eradication, decentralized planning, and a free primary education pilot program that was later made mandatory ([CERID, 2004](#)). There has been emphasized and backed by appropriate means. The appropriate policies were still needed to guarantee that kids with disabilities obtain an education ([Ministry of Education, 2015](#)). By informing the public and empowering educators to improve their teaching, the study's findings have advanced an understanding of the support provided to primary schools in the execution of inclusive education policies ([Zungu, 2014](#)).

Predicted years of schooling have grown, the percentage of children not in school has greatly dropped, and attendance in primary school looks to be almost universal ([Pratham, 2019](#)). Sri Lanka has emerged as a prominent player on the South Asian continent. However, the nation has come under criticism for failing to adapt to a changing globe for a long time by progressively improving and developing ([Alawattegama, 2020](#)).

The researchers found study gaps in the Nepalese education policy viewpoint by examining several national and international practices on education policies and practices. Thus, from an academic and policy standpoint, this study is beneficial to interested parties, scholars, policymakers, educationalists, civil organizations, businessmen, governments, and international communities.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The growth of basic and primary education in Nepal has received special attention from researchers who have looked at the country's basic education policy provisions. A particular region was chosen for this investigation, and the methods for gathering data were explained. The tools utilized to get the data have also been detailed, along with the procedures followed to keep the tools reliable. Because it explains Nepal's basic education policy provisions, this study used a descriptive research design. The study design has also been used to diagnose the policy provisions guaranteeing high-quality education and to pinpoint the challenges encountered in putting the policies into practice following their goals.

Human experiences and works that are articulated and documented in various ways depending on the study's objectives and time limits are commonly referred to as the data-gathering process. To gain a better insight and study of the informants' lived experiences and realities, educational researchers must carry out the necessary information-gathering method.

Data Collection Process

Documents and research material that have been archived already constitute the secondary data. The research study's validity and reliability has improved by the secondary data analysis. As a result, the researchers gathered secondary data from a variety of published and unpublished sources as well as archives, including books, journals, policies, plan papers, study reports from schools, and government of Nepal publications.

Results and Discussions

The development of systematic education started in the 1950s when democracy was restored. It was believed that educating the populace was essential. The Nepali authorities became aware of the widespread literacy in the country. Due to its isolationist policies, Nepal was kept completely isolated from the modern world and in the dark. Before the implementation of the first plan, the nation had 1,165 elementary schools. During the initial plan phase, when over 2,000 primary schools were created nationwide, education received heightened focus (NNEPC, 1956).

Children have the right to free, compulsory basic education as well as secondary education, according to Nepal's 2015 Constitution. It also demonstrates that access to basic education is now a fundamental right for all people. As a result, the development plans and education acts' basic and primary education policies and practices have been examined in this chapter. The primary and basic education policies and practices in Nepal were the main focus of the current study.

Policy Provisions for Basic Education in Development Plans of Nepal

Scholars have examined a range of plans and papers to examine the basic and primary education provisions. The policy provisions for education development were examined in this systematic analysis based on several development plans.

First Five-Year Plan (1956-62): The initial strategy was centered on the primary and secondary education system in schools. The dearth of schools, and institutions for training qualified professionals, and a paucity of trained and skilled teaching staff all pose significant obstacles to the expansion and advancement of education. The National Education Commission report's educational goals demonstrated that education must be accessible to all citizens and must take individual needs into account. Primary education is an area where the plan is already proving to be effective. Approximately 400 persons are trained annually by a large number of instructors, and these newly qualified educators are continuously opening new schools ((National Planning Commission, 1956).

Second Three-Year Plan (1962-65): Under the second plan, which placed a strong emphasis on education, 3,165 elementary schools were built around the nation. The focus was on quality improvement as opposed to building more educational buildings. There were 3.46 million enrolled elementary pupils, up from 1.99 million. The percentage of school-age children obtaining a primary education rose from 15.3% to 27% (National Planning Commission, 1962).

Third Five-Year Plan (1965-70): With a mere 8.9% literacy rate, the third plan similarly placed minimal focus on education. According to UNESCO objectives, the designers intended to offer basic education that was both free and required by 1880. The goals of elementary education were to educate forty percent of boys and girls between the ages of six and eleven and to increase teacher preparation programs by the same amount. Along with adding more classrooms, the focus was also on expanding the role that schools played in new building development ([National Planning Commission, 1965](#)).

The schools that offered free and required education were given priority. Furthermore, a proposal was made to publish and distribute sixteen works as textbooks for elementary schools. The government started giving primary schools funding, which progressively decreased the degree of local school self-sufficiency. Although pupils were not allowed to continue their studies beyond the first and second classes, there was not much improvement in elementary education under the third plan either. Over half of the elementary school students dropped out of the first grade because of the costly and inadequate rewards.

Fourth Five-Year Plan (1970-75): This strategy acknowledged that the nation's overall prosperity depended on the training of an educated workforce and that the provision of a basic minimum education to the masses would be the primary essential in the advancement of education development. Long-term objectives guided the setting of targets for several projects, however a lack of financing made it impossible to accomplish the plan's primary objectives. It was expected that a number of the approved policies from the fourth plan would act as the cornerstone for further expansion ([National Planning Commission, 1970](#)).

The administration proposed giving elementary schools money according to the number of teachers on staff. The majority of funds allocated to primary schools went for teacher wages, which were incredibly cheap when compared to other professions. Because the schools were unable to employ qualified teachers, there was a major obstacle to the development of education quality. In light of these concerns, the government started providing competent teachers with government-funded salaries. Scholarships for students from such areas to study at nearby high schools or training institutions were offered as a solution to the teacher shortage in the northern border regions ([National Planning Commission, 1970](#)).

Fifth Five-Year Plan (1975-1980): According to the education development plan for enrollment in basic and primary school, 11,51,851 students in primary school between the ages of 6 and 8 (or 64% of the total) were expected to have access to primary education facilities by the conclusion of the plan. To concentrate on the student's enrollment in primary school, one teacher school was developed within walking distance in some of the remote, sparsely populated areas. A variety of initiatives have been implemented to boost the number of girls enrolled in primary school, including the designation of new schools and sites, the recruitment of more trained teachers, and the backing of local governments and other class groups ([National Planning Commission, 1975](#)).

Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980-1985): Primary education was to be changed from 1-3 to 1-5 during the sixth plan era, while lower secondary education may be changed from 4-7 to 6-7. It was also expected that educational opportunities would be available to everyone and that the new organization would be utilized in all 75 districts across the country. The goal of the policy was to raise educational standards while consolidating the current educational facilities. A process for developing new educational programs, methods, and techniques based on research and research that provided appropriate teaching

materials was established. The program was implemented by educational policies, increased the number of trained teachers, and improved the curriculum, teaching materials, and exam systems ([National Planning Commission, 1980](#)).

Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-1990): Seventy-five percent of children aged six to ten were to have access to primary (1–5) education, according to the sixth plan. By the time this strategy came to a conclusion, 78% of the goal had been met. The plan's planners felt that substantial reforms to schooling were necessary. Based on the findings of school mapping, the districts ought to research the country's current educational system and advocate for the creation of new institutions. That policy had placed a strong focus on improving educational standards. Thus, it was seen to be crucial to stress the need for more trained teachers, improved school infrastructure, curriculum development that complied with federal standards, textbook accessibility, and regular, effective school supervision ([National Planning Commission, 1985](#)).

Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-1997): Nepal made significant progress in education up to the eighth plan, but only in a numeric sense. Consequently, there was a discrepancy between the number of schools that opened and the increase in student enrollment. Growing and expanding elementary education has received special attention because the country's goal is to have universal primary education and a 67 percent literacy rate by the year 2000. Improvements in the quality of education have not kept pace with the numeric expansion of Nepal's educational system. When government resources are insufficient to satisfy the expanding demand, the necessary actions must be taken to improve the engagement of women, indigenous groups, and inhabitants of poor regions in education ([National Planning Commission, 1992](#)).

Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002): Giving everyone in society an equal chance at success, placing education at the forefront of national development, raising educational standards, increasing public awareness of democracy, and producing disciplined, productive, committed, and socially responsible citizens were the long-term objectives of the Ninth Plan. Education in the fields of literacy, schooling, vocational training, and higher education may improve with the aforementioned objectives. The country's present literacy rate will reach 100% in 20 years with the introduction of primary education thanks to the active engagement of the business sector ([National Planning Commission, 1997](#)).

Tenth Five-Year Plan (2002-2007): The purpose of basic education in the tenth century was to construct and expand a first-rate educational system that would meet the demands of the rising nation. Measurable objectives of the primary education program included achieving 90% net enrollment, 30% female teacher representation, 450,000 healthy meals annually for children, and scholarships for low-income and female students. Primary education was designed to make secondary education more accessible to the growing number of primary school graduates and to enhance secondary education so that the upper secondary level became the final stop for school-level education ([National Planning Commission, 2002](#)).

Eleventh Three-Year Plan (2007-2010): Considering that the main objectives of modern education are to raise society by revealing people's latent abilities and potentials and to prepare citizens for scientific life by endowing them with human virtues and benefits. Producing productive, aware, and diligent individuals who could satisfy the needs of both local and international markets was the long-term objective of the education sector. Ensuring democratic, inclusive, and high-quality basic education was

crucial to constructing a prosperous, modern, and equitable Nepal ([National Planning Commission, 2007](#)).

Twelfth Three-Year Plan (2010-2013): Ensuring that every citizen has access to high-quality education should result in capable people who are changing the country's social and economic landscape, competing globally in the era of globalization, and fostering patriotism among those who construct nations. The long-term goal of education under the Twelfth Plan was to ensure that all people have equitable access to basic, high-quality education to build a prosperous, contemporary, and just Nepal. The goals and policies of the education sector were designed with the long-term vision of producing aware, competent, productive, and competitive individuals for a prosperous and just Nepal by offering inclusive, egalitarian, and high-quality education and making use of available opportunities ([National Planning Commission, 2010](#)).

Thirteenth Year Plan (2013-2016): The plan addressed the main problems of low pass rates, low rates of dropout and repetition at all educational levels, insufficient educational opportunities for children from underprivileged and disadvantaged community schools, inefficient oversight of institutional schools, and a dearth of higher education frameworks. The main objectives of education were to raise the bar for instruction's quality and relevance across the board, ensure that it fosters employability and life skills, and boost the system's overall efficacy, efficiency, and accountability. It was projected that 90% of children with experience in basic enrollment and 100% of net enrollment in primary education would be enrolled in the first grade, accounting for 64% of students with early childhood development experience ([National Planning Commission, 2013](#)).

Fourteenth Three-Year Plan (2016-2019): Since education is seen as a fundamental human right, the state ought to offer all individuals access to it. The development of education as a tool for socio-economic transformation should be the focus of education policy and programs, which should also aim to improve quality and managerial capacity to achieve socioeconomic objectives. Education should be provided at all levels based on equity and employment-oriented learning. The management of basic education, which was required and free, was the main emphasis of the strategy. The strategy anticipated 94 percent net enrollment at the basic level (Grades 1–8) ([National Planning Commission, 2016](#)).

The growth of basic education management has been outlined in the 14th plan, which guarantees free and mandatory support for initiatives aimed at providing all children with access to a basic education. Programs for alternative schooling, such as day shift tiffin and scholarship programs, were already planned and ready to be implemented in the designated locations. There were also plans to improve teacher preparation, vacancy adjustment, teacher management, and the quality of the learning environment. Special focus was paid to leveraging communication and information technology in the teaching and learning process, as well as to developing child-friendly learning environments, providing learning materials, developing learning programs, multiclass teaching, and education in mother tongues ([National Planning Commission, 2016](#)).

Fifteenth Five-Year Plan (2019/20-2023/24): The plan states that the country would experience long-term peace and prosperity when its citizens have a high level of education. The Constitution of Nepal states that one's fundamental right is the ability to receive a basic education. The constitution guarantees the right to free basic education, free and required education up to that point, and free secondary education. The approach intends to expand the whole education system by fortifying the

state's leading position and the private sector's complementary role. The goal of education should be to build human resources for socioeconomic transformation. Ensuring that all students have access to free early childhood education, free secondary education, and high-quality instruction that is both creative and practical for everyday life is the aim of the basic education plan ([National Planning Commission, 2019](#)).

Provisions of Education Rights in Different Constitutions of Nepal

The Constitution of Nepal (1962) placed a strong emphasis on teaching all citizens to read and write in the country's official language for educational purposes ([Government of Nepal, 1962](#)). Following the political movement's success, the Nepalese Constitution was drafted to guarantee citizens' rights to an education. Sections 18(1) and (2) of the 1990 Nepalese Constitution referred to the right to an education. According to the constitution, every community living in Nepal is entitled to the preservation and advancement of its language, script, and culture. Additionally, each community is allowed to run schools in its mother tongue up to the elementary level to provide education for its children ([Government of Nepal, 1990](#)).

The Nepalese Constitution (2015) has guaranteed everyone's fundamental right to a basic education. The Nepalese Constitution ensures that all residents have access to free public education up to the primary level, free public education up to the secondary level, and basic education. According to the provisions of this constitution, citizens who are economically disadvantaged and have disabilities are also entitled to free higher education. In addition to the right to receive education in one's mother tongue and the ability to open and run schools and other educational institutions in accordance with the law, there is also the provision of free education through brail script for citizens with hearing or speech impairments, free education through sign language, and citizens with visual impairments ([Nepal Law Commission, 2015](#)).

Provisions for Basic and Primary Education in Different Acts and Policies of Nepal

After Nepal's democracy was restored in 1950, the populace needed to receive an education. The Nepalese government recognized that the country's literacy rate has increased from Mechi to Mahakali and from the Himalayas to the Terai. Primary school is a child's first regularly structured learning environment, according to the NPE (1956) research report, which also emphasized that primary education is the cornerstone of all learning. The country's illiteracy rate might be eliminated through primary education. Children in primary school, ages six to eleven, get direction, supervision, and guidance.

According to the Education Act (2018), compulsory education is the necessity that children within the age range set by the Nepali government routinely study and complete the foundational level of study upon entrance to schools or other alternative educational institutions. Any teaching provided by a school or other educational establishment without requiring payment from the student or their parents is considered free education. The right to education was further emphasized by that Act, which stated that "Every citizen shall have the right of equal access to quality education." Nobody is allowed to face discrimination in the pursuit of education on any basis.

If there is no school accessible for any children of the age to acquire education at the basic level, the local government shall construct a school at such a location within three years of the commencement of

this Act or provide other means for such children to receive education up to the basic level ([Nepal Law Commission, 2018](#)).

Education policies must be implemented on time to guarantee people's right to an education through efficient, goal-oriented administration of education at all three levels of government by the federal system. In a similar vein, the goal of this national education policy formulation is to codify and bring together disparate education sector regulations to satisfy the demand for a cohesive national education policy ([Ministry of Education, 2019](#)).

Net Enrollment in Primary and Basic Education during the Development Plans

After 1956, Nepal began the process of deliberate planned growth. 1956 marked the start of the first five-year plan, which ran from 1956 to 1962. The first plan, or the first pace of methodical development, has been adopted as the starting plan document. The goal of the initiative was to assist folks with writing and reading in their native tongue. The major net enrollment goal in the second plan was just 15.3%, however by the time the plan ended, 27% of this goal had been reached.

By the end of the fourth plan, 50 percent of the primary net enrollment objective had been achieved, compared to 32 percent originally. The fifth plan was successful, although net enrollment in elementary education was not increased to a suitable level. The enrollment progress at the elementary and lower secondary levels was rather adequate in the sixth and seventh plans. Following the eighth plan, general educational development accelerated and the rate of net enrollment in primary and basic education picked up steam.

The Eighth Plan (1992–1997) set a goal of having 90% of all children of primary school age enrolled in primary education (grades 1–5), however, the actual enrollment rate was just 69.4%. In a similar vein, 50.3% of students enrolled in basic education (grades 6–8), compared to the aim of 45%. Under the Ninth Plan (1992–1997), net enrollment in primary education was intended to reach 90%, but the actual percentage was 80.4 percent.

In a similar vein, 59% of students enrolled in basic education (6–8) met the goal of 65 percent. Furthermore, 96.6 percent of students enrolled in elementary school in the 13th plan (2013/14–2015/16) met the goal of 100%. In a similar vein, 89.4% of students enrolled in basic education (grades 1–8) met the goal of 90% net enrollment. The goal of net enrollment in primary education was 100% in the 14th plan (2016/17–2018/19), while the actual result was 97.2%. Similarly, the goal of net enrollment in basic education was 94%, but the actual result was 92.3%. The planners established a goal of 100% net enrollment in primary education and 99% in basic education for the 15th plan (2019/20–2023/24).

To guarantee 100% participation, the net enrollment objectives at both educational levels have been raised dramatically. The goal and outcomes of net enrollment in grades 1-4 from the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992–1997) to the Fifteenth Plan (2019/20–2023/24) in primary education. In most schemes, the net enrollment outcome has almost achieved the desired level. Regarding the designated plan periods, the outcomes were good.

Findings

The goal of the various development plan eras was to enhance Nepal's educational system. The development of elementary education has received priority, with little expense incurred. The initial strategy was centered on the primary and secondary education system in schools. The National Education Commission was established during that time to advance schooling.

- Rather than building additional educational facilities, the second plan prioritized the expansion of basic education by creating over 3,000 primary schools and enhancing their quality. The third plan's goal is that over 40% of school-age children between the ages of 6 and 11 get primary education.
- The fourth plan's focus was on many long-term activities, but funding was insufficient. The budget indicated that wages accounted for the majority of their funds.
- The fifth plan was centered on growing the number of pupils enrolled in elementary school, where several community assistance initiatives were launched to encourage the enrollment of females.
- The identification of new schools and the selection of suitable instructors received more emphasis. Primary education was to be modified from 1-3 to 1-5 under the sixth plan, while lower secondary education was to be changed from 4-7 to 6-7. The goal of the education policy was to raise the standard of elementary education by consolidating the current educational resources.
- The Seventh Plan prioritized the system, respected national rights and duties, and defended national sovereignty. The main goal of primary education policy was to raise literacy rates as soon as possible through adult and elementary education.
- Additionally, focus was placed on hiring skilled teachers, improving school facilities, developing curricula that comply with federal standards, making textbooks available, and effectively overseeing the school. The local government was tasked with implementing mandatory primary education on a trial basis.
- In the eighth plan, elementary education was heavily emphasized. Ninety percent of the actual primary school-age children (6–10) were projected to be served by the elementary education (1–5) facility.
- The Ninth Plan established the long-term objective of education, guaranteeing that all children up to the 12th Plan will have access to elementary education. The growth and development of elementary education received focus, which made the necessary facilities more readily available.
- While primary education's objective was to increase secondary education accessibility for the increasing number of primary school graduates, the tenth plan sought to establish and build a high-quality education system.
- The eleventh plan began with the education sector's long-term objective of producing productive, aware, and conscientious individuals to satisfy the demands of both local and international markets.
- Dropout and repeat rates at all educational levels, primarily community schools, were brought up in the 13th plan. To boost the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of education policy,

including free and mandatory education, the major goals of education were established to raise the standards and application of teaching at all levels by ensuring and developing employability and life skills.

- The 14th plan outlined plans for the management of basic education, guaranteeing free and compulsory education, and supporting initiatives to provide all children with access to basic education.
- All students should have access to free early childhood education and free secondary education with high-quality teaching that will be relevant for everyday life and innovation, according to the newest plan of the 15th plan, which is basic education.
- Since every person should have access to a top-notch education, the Education Act of 2018 has placed a strong emphasis on education rights. In a similar vein, the legislation has restricted free and required education.
- The National Education Policy (2019) has prioritized the provision of free and compulsory basic education, school enrollment for all children, continuity of education for all enrolled children, and incentives for improving the quality of education.

Conclusions

The purpose of this research project was to examine Nepal's basic education policy provisions. Numerous thorough investigations have demonstrated that Nepal's education system has significantly influenced the country's socioeconomic change. The achievement of policy objectives and high-quality education were guaranteed by appropriate education policy measures and their practical ramifications.

Using an interdisciplinary framework and descriptive study approach, researchers have looked at the efficacy of adopting comprehensive school education policies, particularly basic and primary education policies and practices. The government of Nepal is provided with free and obligatory primary and basic education by the country's constitution, education policies, and education statutes.

The elementary education policies and practices in Nepal were the subject of this study. To further enhance Nepal's education system and policy practices, a variety of concerns may be covered in policy creation through the examination of current education policies, plan papers, education acts, field research, expert interviews, and focus group discussions. The results of this investigation may affect present and future policy in some way.

To guarantee free and compulsory education in basic and primary education, extensive literature reviews, Nepal's education policy, and the outcomes of basic and primary education policies about policy requirements are sufficient. The results of this study indicate that elementary education in Nepal is free and required by law. Most students have access to free literature; however, certain publications must be purchased. According to this study, there should be improvements made to the policy implications of implementing free and compulsory education for basic and primary schools.

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